

SPECIAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT – FY2014

Town of Rowe

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

FRANKLIN, SS.

To either Constable of the Town of Rowe in the County of Franklin,

GREETING:

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you are directed to notify and warn the inhabitants of the Town of Rowe, qualified to vote in the elections and town affairs, to meet at the **ROWE FIRE STATION** in said **ROWE** on **Wednesday, the Fifth of March 2014**, at **6:30 P.M.** in the evening, then and there to act on the following articles:

ARTICLE 1: To see if the Town will vote to amend Article II, Section I of the General By-Laws by changing the Treasurer's position from Elected to Appointed.

Article 1 Explanation:

The Treasurer controls millions of dollar, is the custodian for all money that belongs to the Town, and must keep up with all new legislation. This position has become more complex than it used to be and it now requires a person with specific training and experience. (Please see handout.)

This Article requires a simple majority vote.

If this Article passes, the question will be put onto the Annual Town Election Ballot.

The Finance Committee unanimously recommends passage of this Article.

ARTICLE 2: To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Free Cash the sum of 2,500.00 to increase the Treasurer's Stipend from \$7,982.00/year to \$12,982.00/year, \$2,500.00 being the amount necessary to fund this increase until the end of FY14, or take any other action relative thereto.

Article 2 Explanation:

The role of the Treasurer includes payroll responsibilities, as noted in MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL LAWS, (MGLS) The duties of the Rowe Treasurer have been expanded to include these duties as dictated by MGLS and as recommended by the MASS Department of Revenue Internal Control Review. Even with this proposed increase, the Rowe Treasurer's stipend is still one of the lowest in Franklin County with only six (6) of the 26 other towns paying their Treasurers less.

MASSACHUSETTS Collectors and Treasurers Manual:

The treasurer possesses a number of specific responsibilities relating to payment of and accounting for salaries and wages. These include:

- Receiving, accounting for, and disbursing all payroll and personnel deduction amounts (taxes, retirement, insurance, annuities, etc.).
- Maintaining all payroll and personnel records and acting as liaison between employees and the retirement board, insurance vendors, etc. (149:178B; 175:138A)
- Acting as custodian and administrator, if so appointed, of the unemployment compensation program. (40:5E)
- Assuring compliance with the General Laws and with state and federal regulations pertaining to labor and industry standards and to retirement and insurance benefits.

The Finance Committee unanimously recommends passage of this Article

ARTICLE 3: To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Free Cash the sum of \$3690.00 to fund an increase in the Town Hall Custodian's hours from 8 hours per week to 15 hours per week for the remainder of FY14, or take any action related thereto.

Article 3 Explanation:

The Town Hall Custodian has requested four (4) additional hours in order to properly clean the Town Hall and the Gracy House, finding as she has, that eight (8) hours is not sufficient. In addition, Fire Chief Paul McLatchy, Jr, has requested that the Town Hall Custodian have the Fire Station added to her list of tasks, (this expense will be shared with the Police Department;) and the Highway Superintendent, James Taylor, has requested cleaning of the toilets at the DPW building. The total number of hours now requested is 15.

The Finance Committee unanimously recommends passage of this Article.

ARTICLE 4: To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Free Cash to the Fire Department Operations the sum of \$1,464.00 (\$750.00) purchase, and \$119.00/month x 6 months) for an Emergency Reporting Software package, or take any action related thereto.

Article 4 Explanation:

This program tracks inventory, maintenance of inventory, incidents, personnel, and training, and facilitates reporting for the Massachusetts Fire Incident Reporting System (MFIRS.)

The Finance Committee unanimously recommends passage of this Article.

ARTICLE 5: To see if the Town will vote to transfer \$1,000.00 from Free Cash to the Fire Department Operations for a new keyless entry system for the front door to the Fire Station, or take any action related thereto.

Article 5 Explanation:

A keyless entry system will make it easier and faster for firefighters who are responding to a call from a location other than their homes, in which case they may not have their fire station keys with them

The Finance Committee unanimously recommends passage of this Article.

ARTICLE 6: To see if the Town will vote to transfer \$500.00 from Free Cash to the Fire Department Operations for a digital projector for training, or take any action related thereto.

Article 6 Explanation:

A digital projector will facilitate training sessions

The Finance Committee unanimously recommends passage of this Article.

ARTICLE 7: To see if the Town will vote to transfer \$1000.00 from Free Cash to the Fire Department Operations for safety measures on the hose tower, or take any action related thereto.

Article 7 Explanation:

Two possible systems are being researched which would ensure the safety of the firefighters when using the hose tower.

The Finance Committee unanimously recommends passage of this Article.

ARTICLE 8: To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Free Cash the sum of \$10,000.00 to the Legal Expense line to replenish it or take any action related thereto.

Article 8 Explanation:

Due to unforeseen circumstances, the legal bills have been higher than expected.

The Finance Committee unanimously recommends passage of this Article.

ARTICLE 9: To see if the Town will vote to transfer the sum of \$14,357.08 from Free Cash to the Reserve Fund or take any action related thereto.

Article 9 Explanation:

Before Free Cash was certified, the following sums were taken from the Reserve Fund to pay for:

- 1.) \$13,500.00 for the new Fire Station oil tank and the labor involved.*
- 2.) \$587.87 to cover the shortfall in the Veterans Operations budget for bronze flag holders on veteran's graves.*
- 3.) \$269.21 to cover the increase in the Town Hall Elevator contract.*

The Finance Committee unanimously recommends passage of this article.

ARTICLE 10 : To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$1,590.00 from Free Cash to the Police Department Operations for protective vests for the Rowe Police Officers or take any other action relative thereto.

Article 10 Explanation:

Protective vests are a standard in today's policing world as they protect police officers from harm in the course of all police work.

The Finance Committee unanimously recommends passage of this Article.

ARTICLE 11: To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$9,655.00 from Free Cash to the Town Coordinator's Salary Line Item for the accrued vacation and sick time of the retiring Town Coordinator or take any other action relative thereto.

Article 11 Explanation:

In compliance with the Separation Agreement between the Town of Rowe and Ellen Miller, the latter is entitled to accrued vacation and sick time hours.

The Finance Committee unanimously recommends passage of this Article.

ARTICLE 12: To see if the Town will vote to appropriate from Free Cash to an account to be established (Solar Legal Defense Account) the sum of \$15,000.00 to defend the Town against the company Seaboard Solar's appeal against the Planning Board or take any action related thereto.

Article 12 Explanation:

The company, Seaboard Solar, was denied a special permit by the Planning Board to disrupt 44 acres of forest in order to create a large-scale ground-mounted photovoltaic installation with 21,078 solar panels. Seaboard Solar filed to appeal this decision and the estimated cost of defending the decision is \$15,000.0

The Finance Committee unanimously recommends passage of this article.

ARTICLE 13: To see if the Town will vote to move and appropriate from Free Cash the sum of \$14,000.00 to establish Fiber optic service to the Rowe Elementary School, or take any other action relative thereto.

Article 13 Explanation:

The Rowe Elementary School was originally scheduled to be one of six locations in Rowe to receive a high-speed fiber optic connection through the Mass Broadband Institute (MBI). When the school was destroyed, MBI removed this location as a target site.

Completing this installation at the earliest possible date will strongly support a timely construction process and opening of the new Rowe School. This same installation work will be needed once the school opens anyway so that internet communications are available to Rowe students.

Note: By the time of this STM we may have received cost estimates with more detail allowing us to adjust the requested amount downward. The \$14,000.00 amount represents a realistic maximum estimate. Also, some cost offsets might be possible through limited installation funding by MBI, and through a state-wide eRate grant program for educational institutions.

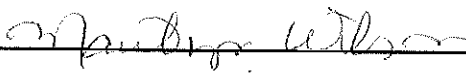
The Finance Committee unanimously recommends passage of this Article

ARTICLE 14: To transact any other business that may lawfully come before the meeting.


And you are directed to serve this warrant by posting up attested copies thereof at the **Rowe Town Hall** and the **Rowe Transfer Station** in said Town, fourteen days at least before the time of holding said meeting.

Hereof fail not, and make due return of the Warrant, with your doings thereon, to the Town Clerk at the time of said meeting, as aforesaid.

Given under our hands this **NINETEENTH** day of **FEBRUARY** in the **YEAR OF OUR LORD TWO THOUSAND** and **FOURTEEN**.



Marilyn Wilson, Chair



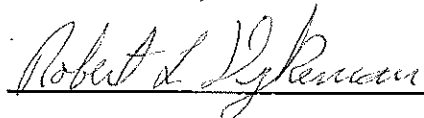
Susan Gleason, Vice-Chair



Noel Abbott, Selectman

SELECTMEN OF ROWE

A true copy, Attest:



Robert L. Dykeman, Constable

FRANKLIN, SS.

Pursuant to the within Warrant, I have notified and warned the inhabitants of the Town of Rowe by posting up attested copies of the same at the **ROWE TOWN HALL** and the **ROWE TRANSFER STATION**, **FOURTEEN** days before the date hereof, as within directed.



Robert L. Dykeman, Constable



Date